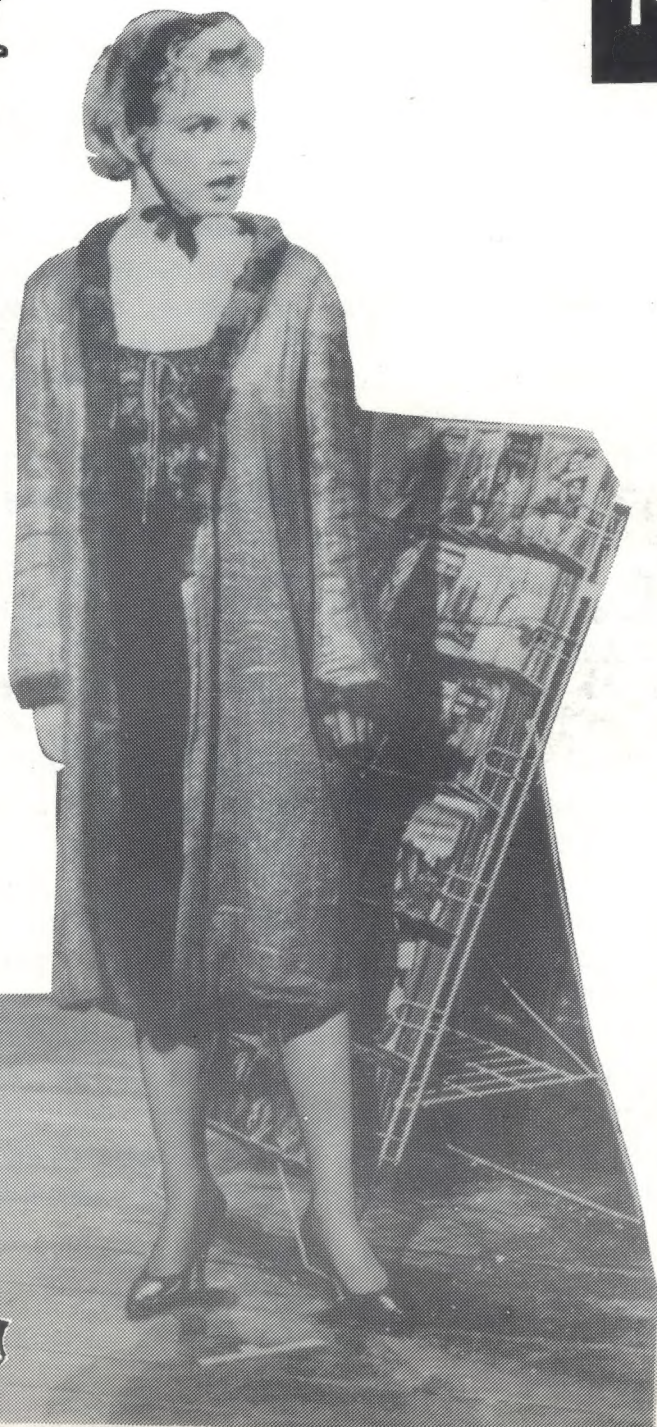


# PAPERBACK *Forum*

No. 1  
1984



\$3



Paperback Forum rustles its pages in the hope of opening up, scrutinizing and defining our common avocation and obsession. Each collection, each collector's particular vision, leads us to a new understanding and appreciation of different aspects of the paperback world. In the collecting of paperbacks there seems to be no objective values other than condition (and even that is often subject to interpretation). But we assume that among our readership are those, like us, for whom reading a book in its vintage softcover edition adds to the experience a sense of the time of the writing, a feeling for its innocence and romance.

The incredible diversity of material that makes up a collection adds to the specialness. Paperbacks occupy a unique place in the field of collectibles in that the range of possibilities exists on many planes, including the covers which trace the development of the iconography and the zeitgeist of our times; the words inside which run from the apex of serious literature to the depths of sleazy porn, or perhaps, from the doldrums of serious literature to the heights of sleazy porn; as well as publishing history and format anomalies.

The vast quantity of what may be collected is daunting, but the hope persists of a complete run of an imprint, or all of one artist's covers or one writer's works (including pseudonyms). For many, the goal is the discovery of that elusive number (Avon 136 for 25 cents at the school flea market); for others, it is the search itself that provides the reward.

We hope that Paperback Forum will address itself to these very particular particulars and that each article not only explores an interest, but excites responses. For if the magazine is to continue, it must truly be because our readers enjoy it; therefore, any letters of encouragement (or constructive criticism or whatever) are not only appreciated, but essential.

-The Editors



# PAPERBACK *Forum*

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Cover Design and Logo: Piet Schreuders	

EDITORS: Barry  
Kaplan

William  
O'Connell

Jonathan  
White

# RUDOLPH BELARSKI

by piet schreuders

Over a period of twenty-five years Belarski painted more action magazine covers than any other artist. Rudy Belarski painted war scenes for pulp covers in a tent in the woods; he invented the world's first snowmobile; his paperback covers with sexy ladies have become collectors' items, but he was so shy with girls that he often used male models instead.

Today, he gets phone calls from all over the country, asking if he has any of those paintings to sell. He hasn't. All his originals have been kept by the publishers, given away to distributors, or stolen by engravers. Belarski doesn't even own proof copies of his work anymore since an enterprising young man took away a whole box of Belarski's pulp covers, claiming he'd write a book about him. (The man hasn't been heard from again). Original Belarski paintings that do turn up sell for \$2,000 or so to collectors, but Rudy, who originally painted them for a fee of \$100, doesn't see a penny of it.

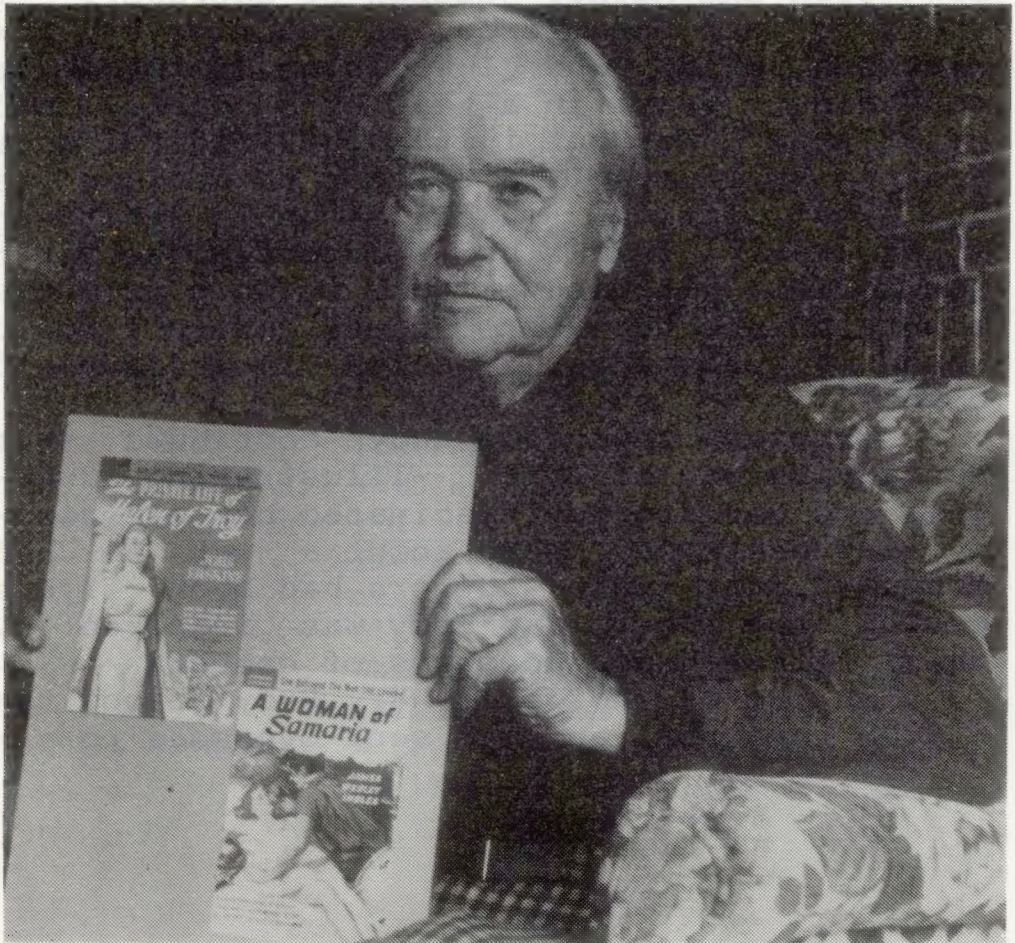
His parents came from Poland around 1890 and settled in the tiny mining town of Dupont, in the neighborhood of Pittston, West of Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Rudy was born March 27, 1900; he had three brothers and three sisters. From the time he was twelve until the age of twenty-one, he worked in the mines, first as a slate picker, later as a mule driver. When he was about sixteen he took an I.C.S. correspondence course in Art. "I was very green,



really," he says. "I thought one was supposed to draw with big lumps of charcoal, until the packets came in with little sticks -- then I understood." He used to paint pictures on whitewashed walls in the mine, using watercolors and brush. His superiors liked his work and gave him the job of painting safety posters. One day, after he had painted the superintendent's portrait on the wall of an engine house, the man was so pleased that he gave Rudy another job: to supervise the engine house. This gave him plenty of free time, and he obtained permission to bring in magazines and books from the library in the next town. With these Rudy educated himself, in art, history, literature and philosophy.

When he was twenty-two he went to New York and worked his way through Pratt Institute, earning his living as a waiter, art teacher, sign painter and portraitist. His





painting instructor at Pratt was Max Hermann. During summers he went back to Dupont to fill in the gaps in his learning at a little seminary there: "I knew the words, but not how to say them at all." In 1929 he was invited back to Pratt to teach specialized subjects in commercial art. He was at that time already an experienced cover artist. "Right after I left school," says Belarski, "I went to Delacorte. At that time I was sort of gung-ho on the war stuff, and I had painted a war picture. Delacorte bought it immediately, in fact they liked it so much that they hung it up in the main office, which made me very proud of course. That started me off, and I did a lot of pulp stuff for them." Another publisher asked him to do an airplane cover, which became another one of his specialties.

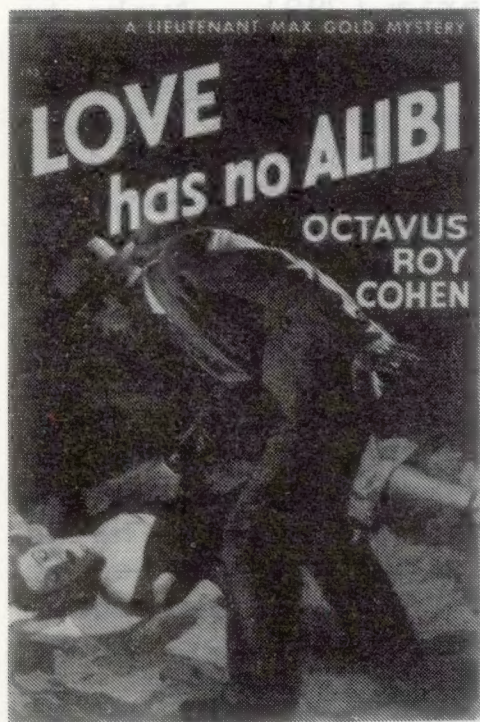
The relative freedom of working for the pulps enabled Rudy to divide his time between New York and Maine, Quebec or Labrador: "I could go into the office and get five or six sketches OK'd, and I would go up into the mountains, stay in a tent or a cabin, and paint them. Way out in the backwoods, I once had to build myself a tractor to get me to the Post Office, which was about thirteen miles away. That's how I invented the first snowmobile! It used to take me down from the mountain into the Post Office, where I would send my paintings, packed in cardboard boxes."

Through the '30s Rudy continued this satisfying way of life. Illustrating adventure and war stories fascinated him especially because they were about a war he had missed; many pulp authors had been flyers during the war, and Rudy was inspired by their first-hand accounts of combat.

In the Second World War, Rudy joined the U.S.O. program and was sent overseas to en-



ertain troops in London hospitals. (Some sketches and portraits from this period have survived.) Back in the U.S., in the freelance business, Rudy found that popular tastes had shifted from war and adventure to light fiction and mysteries. He got to work for Pines Publications, publishers of the "Thrilling Group" of pulp magazines (totalling, at one point, 44 titles). Rudy moved his studio from New York to New Rochelle, N.Y. (a place



where many artists lived at that time, comparable to Greenwich Village in the '30s and Westport in the '60s). Belarski then began to use models for his painting. "With that airplane stuff, you didn't need them, but when I began doing detectives I would use models. In the early days there was a great surplus of models who would come to your studio and pose for a dollar an hour. When I moved to New Rochelle, I found out that many collea-



gues worked from photographs -- they had to, because the girls were getting \$25 by that time." Working with photographs became the standard practice for realistic cover illustrators. The prolific Barye Phillips, for instance, always had a huge file with thousands of poses, ready to use.

Models as well as photographs were often supplied by Fashiongraph, Inc., a photographic studio in Manhattan where artists used to meet, hire models and set up the shots. Colleague Norman Saunders, who also worked with Fashiongraph, remembers Belarski as very shy with girls: "He was so embarrassed, he preferred to use boys!" Eventually, Saunders says, he sent a girl he knew round to Belarski, and that broke the ice.

In the late '40s Rudy met a beautiful blonde named Gladys Bell. He married her and also painted her into a lot of the pulp and paperback covers he produced for Pines. The girls on The Private Life of Helen of Troy (147 \*), A Woman of Samaria (299), Awake to Darkness (212), The Old Battle Ax (302) and The Three Coffins (174), for instance, are obviously one and the same person: Gladys. The marriage, however, was not a success. According to Rudy, Gladys remarked as soon as they got married, "Now that I've got you, I can do anything I like." He divorced her after a few years.

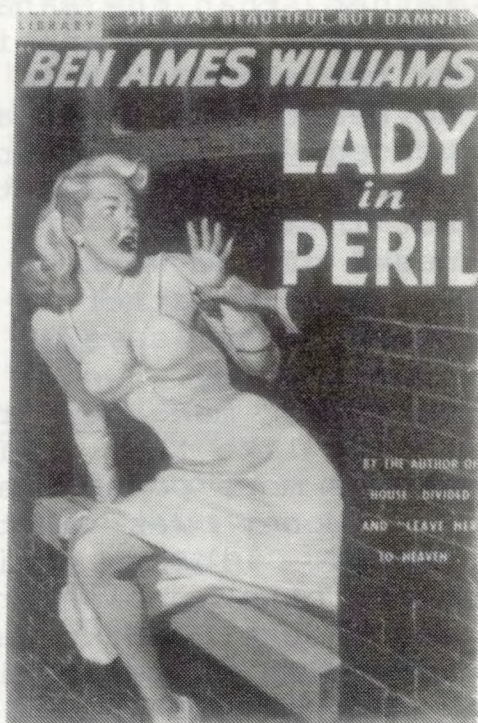
It is not difficult to see why the Popular Library books with Belarski covers are today among the most eagerly collected. They have an individual charm which transcends the obvious "sexiness" that was required in the late '40s. Pulp cliches, like giant hands threatening a half-naked girl, are treated in a way that makes them stand out as personal. The lack of finish in the paintings keeps them from becoming slick, like some of Ray Fease's work. Backgrounds are frequently



green, a rarity on paperback covers.

Belarski used people's hands in prominent positions within the painting. The characters often hold their arms before them, frozen in an anxious poise, hands suspended in the air near their face, the fingers stretched. The back of a hand sometimes touches a forehead in a gesture of weariness. On many occasions, hands are spattered with blood. The dreamlike, round-breasted girls rarely look at the reader, but glance backwards, where something awful is threatening them.

The art director at Pines was Churchill Ettinger, a former illustrator for the New York Sunday World and advertising illustrator. Ettinger was responsible for hiring the cover artists for all of Pines' pulp magazines and Popular Library books, thus establishing a "stable" consisting of, among others, George and Jerome Rozen, Earle Ber-







gey, Rudolph Belarski, Alex Schomburg, Hal-leck Finley, Nick Eg-genhofer, Ray Pease, Kirk Wilson, Samuel Cherry, Ernest Chiria-cka and A. Leslie Ross. Although Rudy has nothing but scorn for most of his art directors ("They tied you down so much, and I didn't feel free!"), he calls Ettinger "ex-cel-lent." Ettinger, Belarski and Bergey would frequently get together for lunch and discuss cover ideas.

This friendly at-mosphere was shattered

when Pines suddenly fired Churchill Ettinger -- because he always chose the artists' side rather than the management's, according to Belarski -- and appointed Edward R. Rofheart in his place. From the onset, Belarski and Rofheart didn't get along well. Rudy always tended to look down on designers like Rof-heart, who couldn't draw the human figure. But in addition, he was tired of the "sexi-ness" of the work he was obliged to turn out. "It didn't matter to them if it wasn't in the story," he says. "The editors would say, 'Don't worry, we'll write it in! Just make sure to make 'em round! Show 'em!' and things like that. They were too damn sexy, it was more porno than anything else."

Money was another problem. Whereas Popular Library paid \$250 for each cover, most other publishers paid \$300 at the time and Pocket Books was already up to \$350, according to Belarski. And for him, working



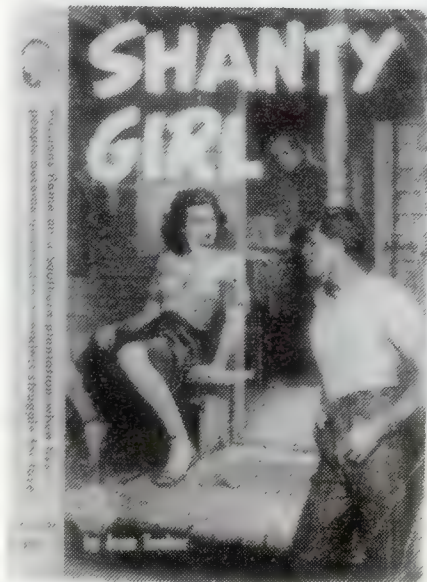
for paperbacks was too complicated for his liking: he had to turn in sketches, have them rejected, turn in new ones, get them altered, execute the paintings...a far cry from the pulp days when he'd knock off five or six paintings in a row.

Rudolph Belarski left Pines Publications in 1952. Earle Bergey had died that same year, and other artists from the Ettinger days just drifted off. The visual change in the Popular Library paperbacks that year was remarkable.

Rudy did a single cover for Pocket Books and several covers for digest-sized novels published by the Hanro Corporation. One of these, Shanty Girl, was a Belarski cover done in the manner of James Avati: "I came into the paperback business rather late, and people like Avati were already settled. There was sort of an Avati craze, and they asked me to make it look a little like Avati. So I looked at some of his stuff to get the spirit of it, and did Shanty Girl."

Even better prices were paid by Adventure and Outdoor Life magazines, for which Belarski then started to work, and men's magazines like Cavalier, which also printed a story by Belarski about his 1930 trip into the Maine woods.

By 1957, however, Rudy was "sick of freelance work" and returned to teaching. He joined the Faculty





of the Famous Artists School in Westport, Conn., where he taught courses in commercial art and figure illustration. In 1960 he married the pretty receptionist there, Barbara "Bobbie" Holzhausen. Between 1969 and 1972 he taught courses in fine art; then he was let go because of a staff reduction.

Rudy and Barbara still live in Westport, in a wooded section of the town, with ample opportunity for hiking, fishing and painting. When I visited them Rudy was busy building another tractor and painting a boat. And there was not an art director in sight.

## A BELARSKI CHECKLIST

compiled by

m. c. hill



### All-American Fiction:

1937-1938

1937:12

1938:2,3-4,5-6,7-8,9-10

### Argosy: 1937-1940

1937: 4/24,5/15,5/29,6/26,  
7/17,8/28,9/18,11/27,  
12/11

1938: 2/19,3/19,4/16,4/23,  
5/7,5/28,6/4,6/18,7/2,

7/9,7/23,8/20,9/3,9/17,9/24,10/22,11/5,11/19,  
11/26,12/17

1939: 3/11,4/1,4/22,4/29,5/6,5/20,5/27,6/3,6/17,6/24,  
7/1,7/15,7/22,7/29,8/5,8/12,9/2,9/9,9/16,9/23,  
9/30,10/14,10/28,11/4,11/18,12/2,12/9,12/23,  
12/30

1940: 1/13,1/20,1/27,2/3,2/10,2/17,2/24,3/2,3/9,3/23,  
3/30,4/6,4/20,5/4,5/11,5/18,5/25,6/1,6/8,6/22,  
7/13,7/27



Popular Library: 1948-1952

- 138 The Case Against Mrs. Ames - Arthur Somers Roche  
(Popular Detective, Nov. 45)
- 147 The Private Life of Helen of Troy - John Erskine
- 154 The Case of the Crumpled Knave - Anthony Boucher
- 159 About the Murder of the Circus Queen - Anthony  
Abbott
- 162 Love Has No Alibi - Octavus Roy Cohen
- 164 Lady in Peril - Ben Ames Williams
- 167 Pattern of Murder - Mignon G. Eberhart
- 168 Death and Taxes - David Dodge
- 174 The Three Coffins - John Dickson Carr (1949)
- 183 Gentle Annie - MacKinlay Kantor
- 188 The Yellow Overcoat - Frank Gruber (Thrilling  
Detective, August 1947)
- 192 Bodies Are Where You Find Them - Brett Halliday
- 193 The Case of the Constant God - Rufus King
- 194 Death on Scurvy Street - Ben Ames Williams
- 205 Home is the Hangman - Richard Sale
- 212 Awake to Darkness - Richard McMullen
- 215 The Silver Forest - Ben Ames Williams
- 216 Cup of Gold - John Steinbeck
- 219 Duke - Hall Ellson
- 224 Sun in Their Eyes - Monte Barrett (1950)
- 227 The Illustrious Corpse - Tiffany Thayer (Popular  
Detective, September 1948)
- 230 Focus - Arthur Miller
- 233 Macamba - Lilla Van Saher
- 241 The Fortunes of Captain Blood - Rafael Sabatini
- 260 The Edge of Doom - Leo Brady
- 264 Dangerous Lady - Octavus Roy Cohen
- 268 The Nine Waxed Faces - Francis Beeding
- 276 Somewhere In This House  
- Rufus King
- 298 The Hangman's Whip -  
Mignon G. Eberhart  
(Mystery Book, Summer  
1949)
- 299 A Woman of Samaria -  
James Wesley Ingles
- 300 The Winds of Fear -  
Hodding Carter



- 302 The Old Battle Ax -  
Elisabeth Sanxay Holding  
(Detective Novel, Spring  
1949)
- 312 Mamie Brandon - Jack  
Sheridan
- 317 The Night Before Murder  
- Steve Fisher (1951)
- 328 Soldiers' Daughters  
Never Cry - Audrey  
Erskine Lindop
- 332 Don't Ever Love Me - Octavus Roy Cohen (Mystery  
Book, Winter 1950)
- 334 The Magnificent Courtesan - Lozania Prole
- 341 Season for Passion - Lee Manning
- 343 While Murder Waits - John Esteven
- 344 The Applegreen Cat - Frances Crane
- 361 Winter Kill - Steve Fisher
- 362 Never Walk Alone - Rufus King (Phantom Detective,  
Summer 1950)
- 364 The Ringing of the Glass - Preston Schoyer
- 371 The Strumpet Sea - Ben Ames Williams
- 379 No Narrow Path - Catharine Whitcomb
- 382 Dark Threat - Patricia Wentworth (Black Book  
Detective, Summer 1949)
- 392 Jailbait - William Bernard
- 418 The Impudent Rifle - Dick Pearce
- 422 The Vanquished - Alan Marcus (1952)
- 424 Fright - George Hopley



Pulps: 1930-1957

Wings - 1930, 1936

Western Round-Up - 1934

Black Mask - 1935

Terence X. O'Leary's War Birds - 1935

The Phantom Detective - 1936, 1939, 1950

Thrilling Adventures - 1936

Thrilling Mystery - 1937

Thrilling Detective - 1937, 1947

Black Book Detective - 1939, 1944

Startling Stories - 1941, 1947

Thrilling Wonder Stories - 1941, 1944

RAF Aces - 1942

Popular Detective - 1945, 1948



Pulps: 1937-1950 (cont'd)  
Mystery Book - 1948, 1949, 1950  
Detective Novel - 1949  
Sportsman - 1957

Digests: 1951-1954

Cameo 321 Tight Skirt - F. Spencer  
Cameo 323 Wild Girl - L. Dixon  
Cameo 332 Nurses' Quarters  
Cameo 335 Wild Girl - L. Dixon  
Cameo 342 Shanty Girl - J. Tucker  
Cameo 354 Shanty Girl - J. Tucker  
Cameo 369 Wild Girl - L. Dixon  
Carnival 918 Rapture Alley - W. Harrison  
Carnival 923 Sinners Club  
Original Novels 718 Savage Love - W. Harrison  
Original Novels 740 Riverboat Girl - N. Bligh  
Original Novels ??? Tight Skirt - F. Spencer  
Venus 159 Shanty Girl - J. Tucker  
Venus 161 Army Girl - W. Harrison  
Venus 162 Wayward Nurse - N. Bligh  
Venus 165 Passion is a Woman - K. Nickerson  
Venus 170 Male Ward - M. Coleman  
Venus 173 Young Doctor - F. Haskell  
Venus 186 Wayward Nurse - N. Bligh  
Venus 194 Army Girl - W. Harrison

Pocket Books

#900 Scirocco - Romualdo Romano (1952)

(Ed. note. All of the titles on this list have covers verified by the artist's signature or are listed in RB's personal records. Several of the covers listed in Hancer's Paperback Price Guide are not included here because they were not examined or because they are not signed by Belarski. An inquiry to Mr. Hancer asking how the unsigned covers were attributed to RB was not answered.)

\* ) In many sources, including my book Paperbacks, U.S.A., this cover is wrongly attributed to Earle Bergey.





25¢



OLD PAPERBACKS  
(DIGESTS, PULPS)

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  - 2 Jones, J..... Murder-on-Hudson
  - 3 Rhodes, J.... Murders in Praed Street
  - 6 Musprat, P... My South Sea Island
  - 7 Riis, S.M.... Yankee Komisar
  - 8 Smith, L.D... Girl Hunt
  - 9 Beeding, F... The Seven Sleepers
  - 10 Mason, F.V... Captain Nemesis
  - 11 Moore, O..... Windswept
  - 12 Williams, B.. Pirates Purchase
  - NN Marquand, J.. The Unspeakable Gentleman
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# AVON ARTISTS

## UNMASKED!

by michael barson

Ann Cantor. William Forrest. Paul Stahr.

You won't find their names in the index to Paperbacks: USA or The Paperback Price Guide. But they were three of the artists who helped define the Avon "look" of the 1940s.

The reason for their obscurity is simple. Although their work was as prolific and as widespread as that of such famous (at least, to paperback collectors) names as Gerald Gregg, Norman Saunders and Rudolph Belarski, most artists who worked for Avon made the mistake of never signing their work.

Avon Books, however for reasons that may never be known, took the trouble of copyrighting much--though not all--of their paperback and digest cover artwork. And on a copyright form, the creator of the artwork generally is noted.

Most paperback houses didn't go to this trouble because, during the 1940s, it cost \$10 for each registration, which also involved time-consuming paperwork. It was unlikely that another company would pirate the cover art. In those days, a cover could be commissioned for less than \$100.00

Still, Avon Books did go to the trouble and expense of copyrighting for about forty per cent of the books they issued between 1942 and 1949.

The checklist that follows reveals some



interesting information. Famed Pocket Books and Bantam Books artists Sol Immerman and Isadore Steinberg did several covers for Avon, as did other "names" such as Leo Manso, George Mayers and Hy Rubin. T. Varaday, who worked for both Pocket and NAL, contributed the cover to #137, Double Indemnity, and we now know who did that odd drawing for #136, The Lurking Fear: A.R. Tilburne.

More importantly, the checklist reveals that a handful of names should be recognized henceforth as having made significant contributions to the Avon look of the 1940s. Chief among them is Ann Cantor, who painted 25 of Avon's 43 releases between numbers 167 and 209 in 1948 and 1949, along with two of the last Avon Murder Mystery Monthlys. Also important is A. Gonzales, who drew ten covers in the early days, as well as three Murder Mystery Monthlys (one of which, #26, had the artwork reused on the small-size edition, Avon #75). As far as the Murder Mystery Monthly series is concerned, top honors must go to William Forrest, who was responsible for nine of the covers (including the classic #6, The Postman Always Rings Twice). Finally there is Paul Stahr, whose ARGOSYlike artwork for MMM #29, The Face in the Abyss and crime classics #62 and #66 remain high points of the company's early days. He also designed MMM #28, one of the Chandler first editions.

Interestingly, a number of the typographic covers, such as #15 and #57, are also



Ann Cantor



Ann Cantor



Leo Manso



credited. Why Avon took the trouble for these and not for other, more pictorial artwork is anyone's guess. But it is nice that they went to as much trouble as they did, in order that we might know a little bit more about the history of the first paperback artists.

AVON BOOKS      Cover Artist 1942-1950

Bergey, Earle.	#236: Venus of the Counting House
Biernacki, J.	#160: Casanova's Homecoming
Blaiklock, Claude.	#17: The Agony Column
Bouldin, M.	#157: Yesterday's Love
Bower, Carl.	#67: Action This Day
	#80: You Can't Keep the Change
	#100: The Secret Adversary
Brule, Elmo.	MMM #24: Dwellers in the Mirage
Bruno, V.	#164: The Moving Finger (photo)
Cantor, Ann.	#167: Piping Hot
	#169: The Amboy Dukes (both blue and yellow versions)
	#175: A Woman's Heart
	#176: Whose Body
	#177: Midsummer Passion
	#178: Fast One
	#180: French Summer
	#181: Her Private Passions
	#183: Burial of the Fruit
	#184: The Girl with the Hungry Eyes
	#185: Never Comes Morning
	#186: Night Cry
	#187: The Love Trap
	#189: The Daughter of Fu Manchu
	#190: The Life and Loves of a Modern Bluebeard
	#192: Young Man of Manhattan
	#193: Impatient Virgin
	#195: Out of the Silent Planet
	#196: Memory of Love
	#197: Son of the Grand Eunuch



Cantor, Ann. #199: The Mayor's Wife  
 #201: Strange Desires  
 #206: Palace of Pleasure  
 #208: The Devil Thumbs a Ride  
 #209: New Orleans Lady  
 MMM #47: The Blonde, the Gangster, and  
 the Private Eye  
 MMM #48: Murder in Her Big Blue Eyes  
 Cole, Robert. #89: Death in the Air  
 #91: The French Key Mystery\*  
 Deckter, Jack. MMM #20: The Embezzler  
 Durba, Victor. #172: Bubu of Montparnasse (photo)  
 Epworth, Renaldo. #83: Sight Unseen  
 MMM #45: On the Spot  
 Forrest, William. #31: The Doctor's Son  
 MMM #5: Burn Witch Burn  
 MMM #6: The Postman Always Rings  
 Twice  
 MMM #8: Maigret Abroad  
 MMM #9: The Red Box  
 MMM #10: A Homicide for Hannah  
 MMM #12: The Hungry Dog Murders  
 MMM #13: If the Shroud Fits  
 MMM #16: Double Indemnity  
 MMM #29: The Sabotage Murder Mystery  
 Freedberg, Paul. #156: Pardners of the Badlands  
 Gaspano and  
 Ricco. MMM #14: Whose Body?  
 Gonzales, A.  
 #39: Rage in Heaven  
 #41: The Narrow Corner  
 #42: The Passionate  
 Years  
 #48: The Road to  
 Victory  
 #51: Nobody's in Town  
 #55: Presenting Lily  
 Mars  
 #56: Theatre  
 #58: Winged Victory  
 #65: Now I'll Tell One  
 #69: The Stray Lamb







A. Gonzales



J. Walters



Robert Cole



Paul Stahr



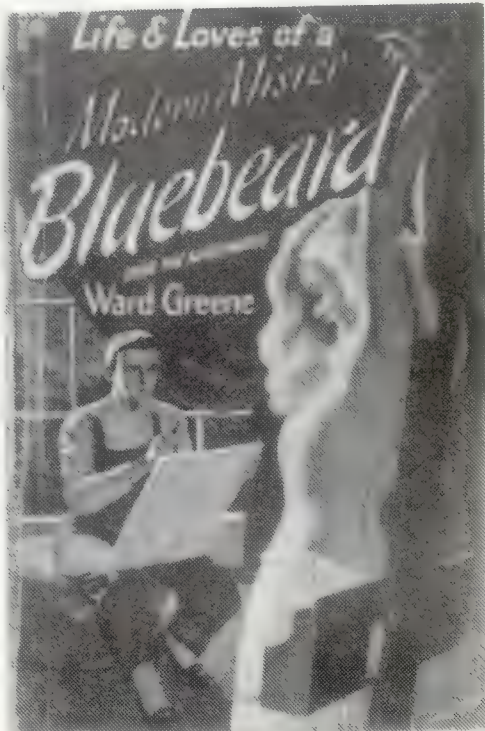
Monroe Reisman



Robert Hilbert



Ann Cantor



Ann Cantor

Gonzales, A.	MMM #26: The Mysterious Affair at Styles
	MMM #30: Farewell to the Admiral
	MMM #31: If I Should Die Before I Wake
Hilbert, Robert.	#118: The Saint in Action
Immerman, (Sol).	MONTHLY NOVEL #1: Sinful Woman
	MONTHLY NOVEL #4: The Villain and the Virgin
Krainin, Ewing.	#154: When She Was Bad (photo)
Manso, Leo.	#23: Suspicious Characters
Maxwell, John.	#150: A Love Episode
Mayers, George.	#110: Terror by Night
	#127: Eastern Shame Girl
	#155: Unfaithful Lady
Milsop, Don.	#107: The Marriage Racket
	#116: Kelly
	MMM #44: Love's Lovely Counterfeit
Moore, Edward.	#170: Bronc Buckeroo
	ROMANCE NOVEL MONTHLY #1: The Little Sinner
Paulsen, Ed.	#204: Portrait of a Man with Red Hair
Perlowen, ( ).	#143: Flash Casey
	#151: Where the Girls Were Different
Reisman, Monroe.	#173: On the Spot
Rubin, Hyman.	#188: Fools and Their Folly
Sorensen, Paul.	#61: Murder in Three Acts
Stahr, Paul.	#53: Mystery of the Red Triangle
	#54: See What I Mean?
	#57: The Hills Beyond
	#59: Heaven's My Destination
	#62: Over My Dead Body
	#64: Back Stage
	#66: Little Caesar
	#68: A Homicide for Hannah
	#71: The Saint Intervenes
	#98: The Virgin and the Gypsy
	MMM #28: Five Sinister Characters
	MMM #29: The Face in the Abyss
	MMM #32: The Saint Vs. Scotland Yard
	MMM #34: The Metal Monster



Stanke, William.	#114: Sinister Errand
Stephens, Barry.	#142: Killing the Goose
	#166: Psyche
	#171: Amorous Philandre
	#198: Yvette
Stein, Modest.	#141: Career in C Major
Steinberg, I.N.	#20: The League of Frightened Men
	#21: The Book of Modern Crime Stories
	#22: Red-Headed Woman
	#25: Trumpet in the Dust
	#28: Tonight at 8:30
Stricker, Carl.	#153: Valley Vixen
	#161: Love's Lovely Counterfeit
Tilburne, A.R.	#136: The Lurking Fear
Tompkins, Gil.	#18: The Man Who Murdered Himself
	MMM #3: Silinski, Master Criminal (with Fred Mayer)
	MMM #4: The French Key Mystery (with Harold Black)
Troeger-Phillips	
	#168: Virtuous Girl
	#174: Sinful Woman
	#191: Replenishing Jessica
Varaday, T.	#137: Double Indemnity
Walters, J.	#165: The Stone of Chastity
White, W.L.	#15: The Book of Modern Short Stories
	MMM #1: Seven Footprints to Satan
	MMM #2: The Mysterious Mickey Finn
Wood, Harley.	#130: The Saint Goes West

\* Note: #91 reuses the artwork from #7.

"MMM" denotes MURDER MYSTERY MONTHLY.

# THE NOVELS OF CHARLES WILLIAMS

geoffrey o'brien

Charles Williams (1909-1975) is at face value the epitome of a macho adventure writer. His heroes are characteristically pre-occupied with hunting (Hill Girl), fishing (River Girl, Go Home, Stranger, Girl Out Back), athletics (The Big Bite, A Touch of Death), and, above all, sailing (Scorpion Reef, Aground, The Sailcloth Shroud, Dead Calm). They are perfectly adapted to Williams' largely rural world, encompassing the Gulf Coast from Galveston to west Florida and the back country adjacent to it, a landscape of bayous and cottonfields, of stifling small towns and swampy backwaters thick with latent violence. When his characters talk about going to the big city they generally mean Shreveport.

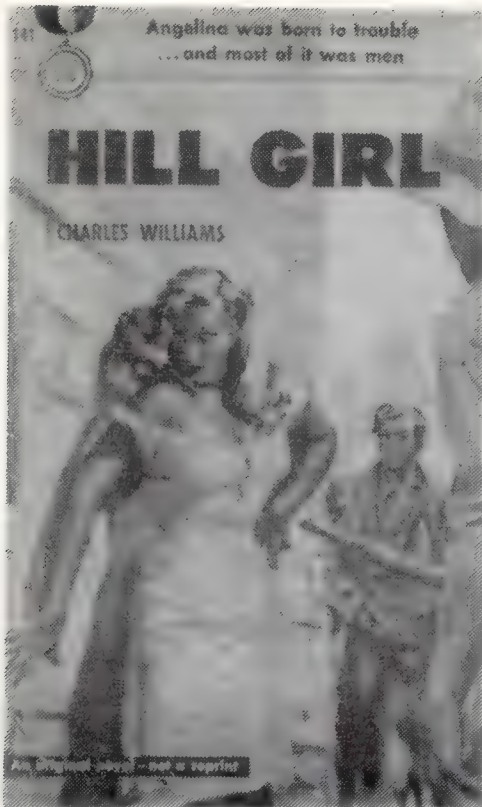
Much of the charm of Williams' work derives from the affection he lavishes on his backgrounds. Even when his heroes are on the run with a suitcase of stolen money, they find time to watch the light sink into the foliage beyond the stream or to become absorbed in the silence of deep woods. The natural world stands in counterpoint to the dizzying and ultimately pointless human actions which Williams relates. This facet of his work is clearest in the sea stories, in which the presence of the sea is so vividly realized as to compensate for the occasional lapses in characterization. In Dead Calm, for instance, a climactic episode requires a wife to search for her husband across miles of empty ocean without a compass, relying



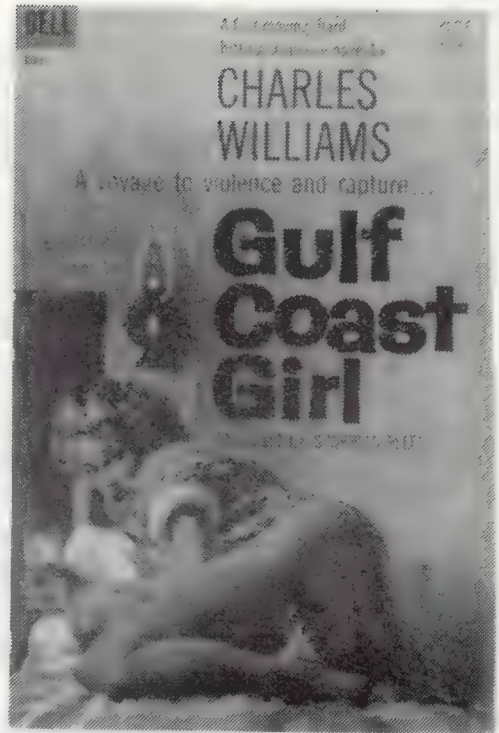
only on a faint memory of how to navigate by the stars. Williams conveys with great intensity his sense of fragile human life somehow threading its way through a void, and he accomplishes this primarily by the extreme precision with which he describes the physical properties of the sea and the boat. It is a sort of romanticism expressed in the language of Mechanix Illustrated.

Williams' first novels, the "Girl" trilogy (Hill Girl, Big City Girl, River Girl), made him one of Gold Medal's superstars. Hill Girl was one of the pioneering entries in the "swamp tramp" sub-genre which flourished in the 50s. However, the eponymous hill girl is not the simple stereotype that Barye Phillips' cover art would suggest, and the novel itself -- despite its familiar blend of hunting imagery, moonshine whiskey, barefoot country girl in cottonsack dress, shotgun wedding -- is really about the hero's discovery that he knows nothing about women. The corollary of this is that he knows nothing about men either -- not even his adored brother, a reckless type whose profound psychosis emerges in an unexpected ending. Hill Girl is apprentice work but all of Williams' chief characteristics are already present: a powerfully evoked natural setting, revelation of character through sexual attitudes and behavior, and a conversational narrative voice that makes the flimsiest tale seem worth telling.

After hitting his stride with River Girl, an operatic account of doomed love which might be described as a male weepie, Williams was to concentrate for most of his career on a particular kind of plot. His narrator is generally an ordinary yet amoral fellow fueled by greed and lust but curiously detached from his own crimes. Hell Hath No Fury, A Touch of Death, The Big Bite, All the



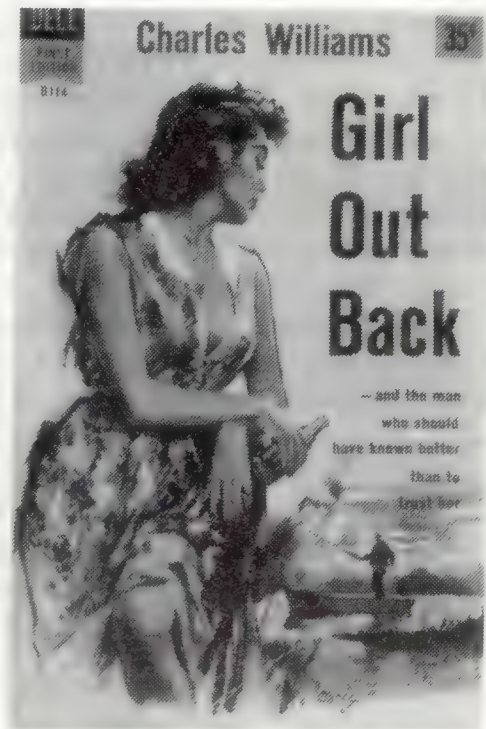
Barye Phillips



Robert McGinnis



Barye Phillips



Darcy



Way, and Girl Out Back are variations on the same serviceable plot: boy meets money, boy gets money, boy loses money. Each of them hinges on a woman, and it is in the intricacies of the man-woman relationship that Williams finds his real subject. Only occasionally (as in A Touch of Death) does he resort to that favorite film noir device, the mysterious murderous beauty. More often the woman is both more intelligent and -- even when she is a criminal -- more aware of moral depths than the affectless hero, who is ultimately destroyed by his inability to read the woman's character instead to project a stereotype. The football hero of The Big Bite -- probably Williams' best book -- typifies this unraveling of single-minded toughness into gibbering paranoia.

This is not to say that Williams is interesting because of the obsessions and ambiguities implicit in his books. These would count for little without the strength of his narration, the ease with which he handles complicated intrigues, the constant sense of physical immediacy. (Williams' gifts as a raconteur are evident in two humorous novels quite different from other books, The Diamond Bikini and Uncle Sagamore and His Girls, farcical backwoods chronicles which -- however broad one may find them -- exhibit a comfortable yarn-spinning vernacular.)

He is not a writer like Jim Thompson, whose conflicts take him (in Pop. 1280 or The Nothing Man) beyond genre altogether, forcing the reader up against the barriers of the fiction he is reading. Williams always stays well within the parameters of a form predicated on satisfying the reader's expectations. The endings of A Touch of Death or The Big Bite are like open wounds; the plot mechanism has led us to an edge from which we

can look into an abyss, but it is the character who falls. The reader remains behind, safely grasping the railing of structure.

Not all of Williams' novels are of equal intensity. Some (The Sailcloth Shroud, Man on a Leash) are merely competent entertainments. One might hypothesize that the relentless exploration of male character in the middle period gives way to a more conventional heroic stance, just as the lacerating sexual relationships are replaced (in Aground and Dead Calm) by a representation of domestic happiness. From first to last, however, he does not deviate from the narrative values which make his books so entertaining and his present neglect so inexplicable.

1950-- Hill Girl (Gold Medal). 1951-- Big City Girl (Gold Medal). River Girl (Gold Medal). 1953-- Hell Hath No Fury (Gold Medal). Nothing in Her Way (Gold Medal). 1954-- A Touch of Death (Gold Medal). Go Home, Stranger (Gold Medal). 1955-- Scorpion Reef (Macmillan; pb Dell as Gulf Coast Girl). 1956-- The Big Bite (Dell First Edition). The Diamond Bikini (Gold Medal). 1958-- Girl Out Back (Dell First Edition). Man on the Run (Gold Medal). Talk of the Town (Dell First Edition; reprint Pocket as Stain of Suspicion). All the Way (Dell First Edition). 1959-- Uncle Sagamore and His Girls (Gold Medal). 1960-- Aground (Viking; pb Pocket). The Sailcloth Shroud (Viking; pb Dell). 1961-- Nude on Thin Ice (Avon). 1962-- The Wrong Venus (Signet). The Long Saturday Night (Gold Medal). 1963-- Dead Calm (Viking). 1971-- And the Deep Blue Sea (Signet). 1973-- Man on a Leash (Putnam).

(Ed. note: Harper & Row has reissued Sailcloth Shroud, The Wrong Venus and Dead Calm as Perennial paperbacks. The Long Saturday Night is now a Penguin book retitled Confidentially Yours.)



# BONIBOOKS LAST G <sup>ASp</sup>

by william o'connell

In 1931, with a host of problems conspiring against them, Albert and Charles Boni (pronounced "Bone-eye") made a final stab at salvaging their 1 1/2 year old paperback experiment, Bonibooks. Pledging to continue releasing "only books of solid and enduring value," they published six more titles. And like the rest of the Bonibooks list, it's a mixed bag.

- 44. Cannibal Nights.....  
Captain H. E. Raabe
- 45. Brooklyn Murders.....  
G. D. H. Cole
- 46. The Case of Jennie Brice.....  
Mary Roberts Rinehart
- 47. The Port of Missing Men.....  
Meredith Nicholson
- 48. South Wind.....  
Norman Douglas
- 49. The Ponson Case.....  
Freeman Wills Crofts

The first three were issued in January, 1931 and the last three were issued in March. The Rinehart, Nicholson, and Douglas novels are still in print, an "endurance" rate that many publishers would envy.

As Peter Manesis pointed out in his informative overview of Bonibooks (Paperback Quarterly, vol. II, no. 4), the brothers Boni began their phase of the paperback revolution

in June, 1929 with the release of Thornton Wilder's The Bridge of San Luis Rey. Boni Paper Books was a book club in which subscribers paid \$5 a year and received 12 unannounced books selected by an advisory board. Bonibooks was born in August, 1930 when the brothers changed over to standard sales through book stores. The main reason for the switch probably was the bizarre and eclectic conglomeration of Paper Books titles. It would have been a true Renaissance man who raved about the December selection, Prosperity: Fact or Myth and then got equally worked up over February's surprise, My Reminiscences as a Cowboy.

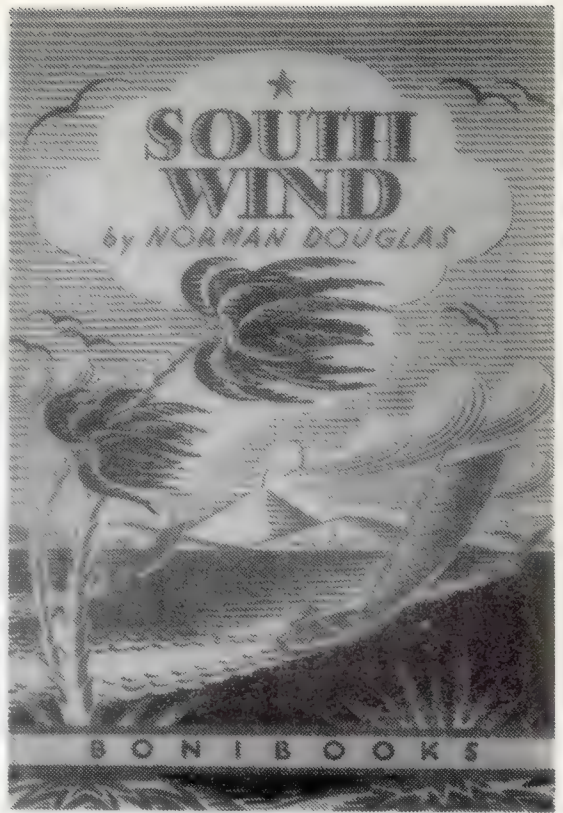
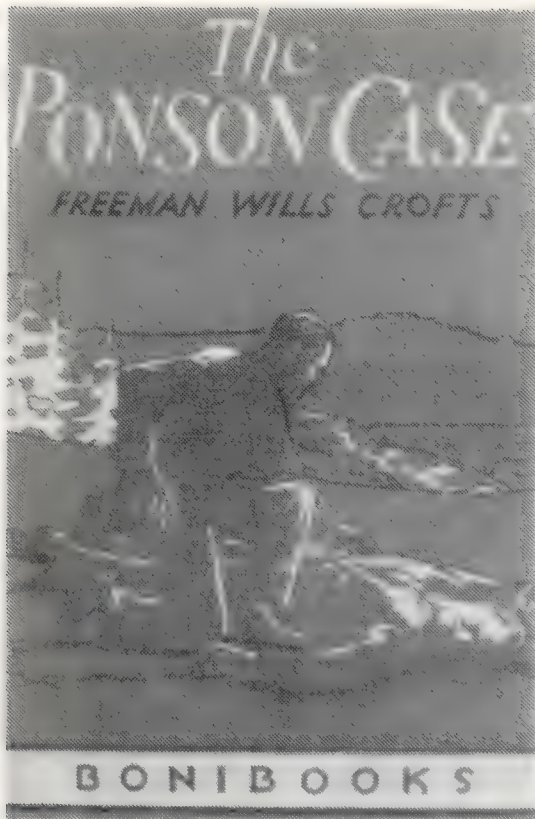
The final Bonibooks stew consisted of six releases that form a curious microcosm of the strengths and weaknesses that made this imprint one of a kind.

Number 44, Cannibal Nights is subtitled Reminiscences of a Free-lance Trader. Cap-



Edward Staloff





tain Raabe, retired to New Jersey in 1927, recounts his adventures on a small sailing ship in the Solomon Islands in the late 19th century. Edward Staloff's cover in black and purple is dramatic, but the dancer -- drawn as a savage African -- obviously had never been near Polynesia.

Brooklyn in the title of number 45 refers to an aristocratic English family, not New York's proletarian borough. George Douglas Howard Cole was a historian, Oxford don, sociologist, socialist, and murder mystery writer. He was friends with both George Bernard Shaw and Dorothy Sayers and wrote Dead Man's Watch, Scope and Method in Social and Political Thought, and an operetta about a labor strike. Brooklyn Murders is a tepid tale of the English country house type. Although G. D. H. C. wrote this opus on his own, he and his wife Margaret (later Dame

Margaret) were the co-authors of twenty-nine whodunits.

According to a Dell mapback blurb, The Case of Jennie Brice, first published in 1913, deals with wrongdoing amongst actors in "a cheap boardinghouse in the flood district of Allegheny" (Pittsburgh). Bonibooks number 46 was later released as Dell 40 (1944), Dell 404 (1950), and Dell 1094 (1965).

The Port of Missing Men, #47, is a 1907 pot-boiler about innocent Americans adrift among sinister European blue bloods. Nicholson was a prominent diplomat, newspaperman, poet, essayist, playwright, and novelist.

The best novel of the lot is undoubtedly number 48, South Wind, by Norman Douglas. This is the sly story of an Anglican bishop whose values are undermined by the warm breezes and laissez-faire morals of life on a Mediterranean island. Considered a minor satiric masterpiece by many, the book was recently reissued in paperback by Dover Publications. The fervid, swirling artwork on the Bonibooks edition is cryptically credited to "M".

The final Boni entry, #49, was The Ponson Case by Freeman Wills Crofts. The works of this paperback stalwart have appeared under the logos of Avon, Pocket Books, Popular Library, and Penguin. The Ponson Case is another slow-paced English upper crust puzzler. The static and pedestrian artwork (uncredited) is a match for the novel; an uninspired and sad send-off to a distinguished series.

In 1931, perhaps in an attempt to counteract the lack-of-quality stigma attached to paperbacks, the Bonis tried a unique packaging idea, cardboard slipcases. The cases were printed with the same two-color artwork as the books themselves. Numbers 42-49 were issued in the distinctive coverings, as were



# SHADOW WALTZ SHVDOM MVTIZ

bhob stewart

To unveil Cornell Woolrich's black doomscapes in contemporary editions, Ballantine art director Don Munson chose illustrator Laurence Schwinger. Schwinger's moody portraits of urban desperation and fear mirror a shadow waltz into the heart and soul of Woolrich's darkness. Trapped in the city canyons of the Woolrich night, isolated figures, backlit by streetlamps that "talcum them thinly white," retreat through "perpetual dimness and labyrinths of concrete" as they slouch toward dawn. Though a newcomer to the paperback mystery field, Schwinger's oil paintings possess a period flavor that summon up the near-forgotten naturalism and individuality of Fifties paperback art.

Q: What led up to the Woolrich series?

Laurence Schwinger: I went to the Philadelphia College of Art, started off as a photography major and switched to illustration. Then I did courtroom drawings for seven years. I worked for Philadelphia station WPVI and then for WPIX in New York. I was also picking up some book jobs, mostly for Doubleday, and doing some other work for a few different advertising agencies. One of the jackets that I did for a Doubleday hardback, an art nouveau-type cover, was picked up by Ballantine and used for the softback. I did some more for Ballantine, and about

three years ago they offered me a contract that allows me to do other work, as long as it's not for other publishers. I can do hardbacks too. The Woolrich series is very different for me, as far as work I had been doing.

Q: There's a brooding, lonely, late-at-night look to the entire series.

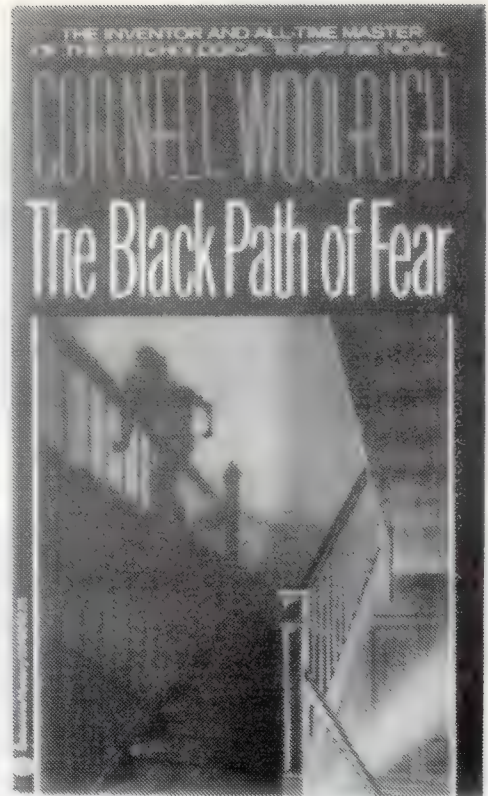
A: I looked at Edward Hopper paintings a lot when I was reading it. Also, Don Munson mentioned to me Hopper's Nighthawks, the painting where the two figures are sitting in a cafe and you're looking through a window. It had a lot of that lonely type of feeling. That's what I tried to get out of them all. I'd never done any mysteries before. I don't even read mysteries. But Don Munson has given me things to do that most people weren't. I was strictly doing romance covers, and he let me do some science fiction, a lot of fantasy -- and now the mysteries.

Q: There's a thematic connection throughout the series with distant, solitary figures isolated in the cityscape. How did you arrive at that solution?

A: I was working with sketches for The Bride Wore Black. That was the first one I read. Then I read The Black Path of Fear. There isn't a figure in that one; there's nothing but a shadow. But I connected the two of them. It was fortunate that I just didn't jump on one and jump on another. Normally I wouldn't do that. So that helped a lot with that kind of theme.

Q: On The Black Curtain what specific NYC street corner is that?





A: I wanted it to have a dated look; I didn't want it to look like 1980. I pulled some old buildings from different photographs. I shot some photographs of New York myself and sort of threw it together. There's really nothing specific in there. Everything is really fudged.

Q: Night Has a Thousand Eyes is remarkable storytelling art with the coffee cup in the foreground and the mysterious figure sealed away in the phone booth, almost like a coffin. The lunch counter practically puts the viewer right in the painting.

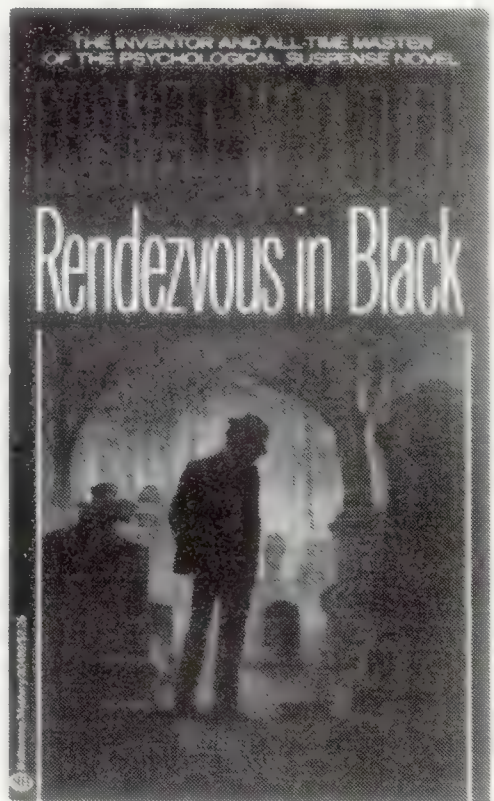
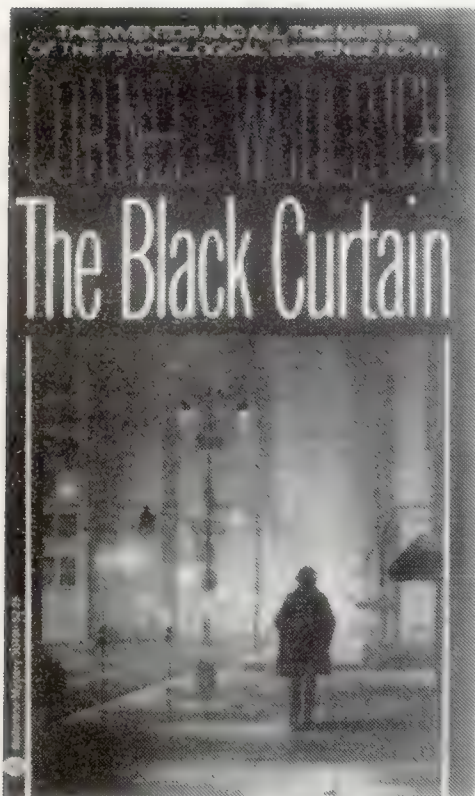
A: Waltz Into Darkness and Night Has a Thousand Eyes are my favorites. I did Rear Window, too. Do you have Deadline At Dawn?

Q: You did the novel's final scene -- where they are running for the bus.

A: I cheated a little bit. When they run for the bus in the novel, they don't run by the bus station; they catch the bus a couple of blocks away. But I have them running in front of the bus station.

Q: You submit color roughs.

A: First, I read the book. Then I usually do a number of pencil sketches and maybe one in color -- one that I think will work the best or one of my favorites. The variations or different approaches, sometimes four or five of them, are in pencil. The final paintings are oils, about 18" X 25". Sometimes I'll start painting in acrylics first and then finish up in oils. I do the whole background really fast and then work into the details with the oil paints. If I were doing a painting and I wanted to tone the canvas, I would have to wait a period of time before





the tone was totally dry. If I put the background down with washes of acrylics first and then start painting over the acrylics, I have something I can start painting immediately.

Q: If you added your signature, your work would be easier to spot in the bookstores.

A: I used to, but now I don't because I never know what happens to them. I've had so many bad experiences with production. Jobs I've done have been chopped to pieces and cut apart. A poster for Roots, a promotion for the TV show, was one of my first big jobs, and ABC decided they wanted it on a black background. They wanted to use it in many more ways than it was originally designed for. I've seen pieces of artwork that looked like pyramids when you looked at them from the side; they were pieced together. I once did something for Ringling Brothers, and they decided that an artist's portrait of a lion-tamer was better than the one I did -- so they used his head on my body. One lion from his work, and one tiger from my work. I've sold a couple of the Woolrichs, and I've signed them. I have the artwork, and I sign the artwork after I get it back.

Q: Many older illustrators never got their work back from publishers.

A: A lot of things have changed. They return all the artwork. There was a big court case when some executive's wife wanted to hang work in her bedroom, but it was decided that they were only buying reproduction rights from the artist. It's very difficult to get work back from advertising agencies, but the publishers will always give it back.

Q: Paperback illustrators don't always get credit lines.

A: On science fiction they do a lot, because they have a following. One of the reasons they don't credit the illustrators in the other books is because the guts, the insides of the book, are printed at a different time than the cover. Sometimes they are not sure who's doing the cover when everything else is being printed. They could put it on the cover, or a little line on the back. That has happened to me every now and then. Doubleday used to do it -- very big on the back. I did a lot of literary-type paperback covers for them, and they always gave me a pretty good credit on the back. But Ballantine doesn't, and I haven't seen it done that much in mass-market paperbacks.

Q: You bounce around, but many paperback illustrators stick to one subject area.

A: There are a couple of people who do a whole lot. Jim Avati, who is in his seventies, has been working a long time, and he really runs a full spectrum. Tom Hall, who's known mostly for his romances, does westerns, likes to do westerns. But some people are typecast.

Q: What's your favorite Woolrich book?

A: I Married a Dead Man. I did that a while ago.

Q: The interior with the wooden phone booths on Night Has a Thousand Eyes is very reminiscent of certain old NYC-area drug stores. Is that a real place?

A: I was sure I would find an old drug store



with an old phone booth in it. I went through so many drug stores, but I couldn't find what I wanted. I got some photos of phone booths out of the library and put it together from photos. In the illustration the phone is on the wrong side; the phone actually would be behind his back. Looking through the coffee and the cigarette gives it a more ominous tone. It sort of picks up on the other covers in the series: You're all alone, and somebody might be haunting you. There are people chasing this guy, watching him make the phone call.

Q: Were you familiar with earlier paperback illustrations of Woolrich?

A: No, not at all.

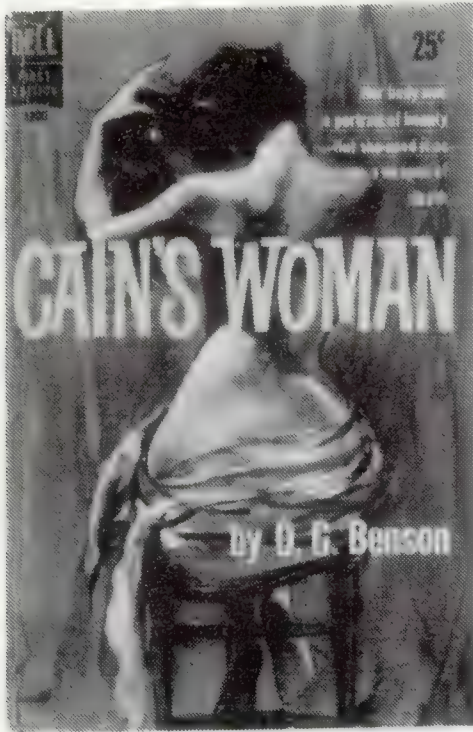
Q: What do you think of Woolrich as a writer?

A: I'm not a mystery fan but I don't think there are any books I've done covers for that I really enjoyed reading as much as his. Some of it was very repetitive, but I know that these have been ripped off so many times for countless television shows. I don't know how many times I've seen TV or movie plots taken from Woolrich. I Married a Dead Man was very familiar in some ways. So was The Black Curtain.

Q: Seeing all your Woolrich paintings together in an exhibit would be nice.

A: Ballantine had an idea they were going to show them at the Society of Illustrators in New York. I'm not a member, and apparently they said I would have to be a member before they could put the show on. I don't know what the status of that is; I haven't heard

"I almost didn't go down to the office that day. Not that it would have mattered, I suppose. She would have reached me anyway..."



Darcy

William  
Lyles

Cain's Woman, by O. G. Benson, published as a paperback Dell First Edition in March, 1960, is a superb work of mystery fiction that, outside of a small group of mystery readers, is almost unknown. One reason: it is the author's only published work of fiction and less than half of the 187,400 copies printed were sold. Another reason may be the cover, which contains no clue that the book is a mystery. Only the inside blurb and the back cover blurb indicate the genre. And readers may have been disappointed by the novel's slow start, where the private-eye



hero, Max Raven, seems too much a pastiche of other private eyes. And his ultimate decimation is so complete, so much worse than Marlowe's in any of the Chandler stories or Sam Spade's in Hammett's The Maltese Falcon, that a sequel would seem to be out of the question. Yet Benson wrote a sequel; that and other details emerge in his letters. I wrote to Benson, telling of my interest and asking for biographical details. The following exchange ensued:

Dear Mr. Lyles: My full name is not important and I would prefer to remain O.G. I was born in 1927 and have lived my entire life in the mid-west, for almost the last thirty years in Evanston. My career as an active writer lasted from 1955 through 1962, most of that consisting of journalistic ephemera justifiably forgotten. Cain's Woman is my only published fiction and, I think, damn close to being the last 25 cent novel published in this country, a distinction which has always given me a certain morbid pleasure, possibly because my experience with Dell was so negative, frustrating and such a can of worms I can only painfully lift the lid and peer back in. To give you a notion, my title was (and is, in my mind) Cain's Wife. Dell's first move was to change the title and suggest certain plot changes which at the time I did not feel in any position to resist. I was eager to be published and very pleased to be associated with a first-rate publisher and assumed everyone there knew what they were doing. I was wrong on all counts, a true babe in the woods with respect to this relationship between writers and publishers. I expected to find a high order of interest, intelligence, skillful writing and editing; in short, a high level of competent professionals able to give me aid and some understanding. What a naif! I came

soon to understand why any artist's prime goal is creative control. If you don't have it, odds are someone is going to screw up your work. In the case of CW, take the cover and blurb copy for example. Twenty years later and I'm still incensed. The basic cover of CW isn't bad. In fact, having the woman's back turned was an excellent notion and the figure was fine. The glaring and obvious error that was made though was that the predominant color scheme was green and yellow. For a mystery novel? Green and yellow? I remember another book Dell brought out about the same time. Same color scheme. Title: Green Willow, I think it was.

I will add only that there is a second Max Raven novel written for Dell under contract. This next case runs on for 600 pages in manuscript, about three times as much as Dell wanted. We fought. I refused to butcher it (the correct term). We parted company. It is hard work, you know, and never came easy to me. My agent at that time was Don Congden of the Harold Matson Agency and he too wanted me to cut it and didn't feel he could offer it around unless I would. I wish I could have but I didn't see how since all suggestions were ludicrous. I offered it to a few publishers and got some wonderful letters rejecting it but one and all felt the length problem was insurmountable. I quit writing fiction. Finis. In retrospect I'm not even sure it was any good. It's a grand failure though. You see, I had a grand flaw as a writer of genre fiction and if Cain's Wife has anything to recommend it it is due to that flaw: I never wrote down. I don't know if you can remember but back in the fifties genre fiction of this type was not held in the regard it is today. A lot of people knew there was some damn fine writing being done in the field but "trash" then and



"trash" now differed considerably. Now there is "good trash." The genre fiction I admired most was that which did not insult your intelligence: characterization, motivation, nice clean style, etc. In short, I gave it all I had to give and in doing so may have just pushed that long book beyond the limits of the formula. As you can see, I'm quite willing to talk about my work (or what was my work) but not very willing to talk about me. All best, O.G. Benson.

\* \* \*

Dear Mr. Benson: ...I know Knox Burger controlled the Dell First Edition line; perhaps you were in contact with him. I would be interested to know who worked with you at Dell. I would love to know what changes were made to your original. Sincerely, Bill Lyles.

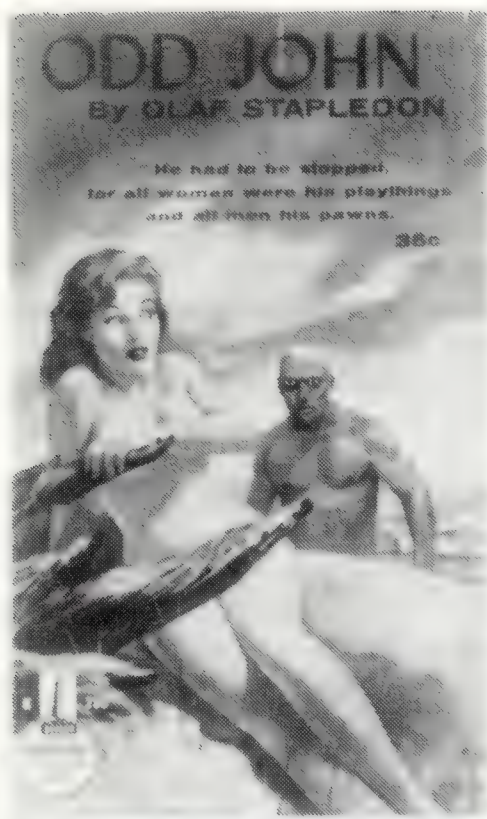
\* \* \*

Dear Bill: My own feeling about CW is that seen in context it's a damn good job such as it is but compared to let's say A Kiss Before Dying or A Coffin For Dimitrios, most of Chandler and many many others, it falls a bit short of brilliant. Feel free though to find it as brilliant as you please. I am flattered. Knox Burger. Yes. He bought CW for Dell but had no hand in the editing as far as I know. I worked with Arlene Donovan and through her with other editorial people there. As I told you I was not happy about the quality of their work. Possibly they have all since moved into areas more suited to their talents. Let us hope so.

Now, since you're interested, let me tell you a bit more about CW. Comparisons to James M. Cain were made but he was never a conscious influence. I think I read Postman and Indemnity back in the forties, long before I ever thought to try my hand myself. I

guess it's fair to say he was an influence at a third or fourth remove in that he influenced a lot of people whose work I admired. My chief influences, and I mean I studied them, were Chandler, John D. MacDonald and the man I admire most of the three, (and perhaps closest to Cain in style) Charles Williams. No need to go into Chandler--he had his faults but just a great, great writer, a writer's writer in many ways and more for unforgettable scenes than all over plotting; John D. for narrative drive, for sheer storytelling, for mastery of the craft of the unstoppable, can't-put-it-down novel. And Williams because of the clean, pure, wonderfully honest and undemonstrative piece of work he turned out again and again. Of the three he has never had his due to my mind though I guess he's done well enough and probably is not complaining. I'm not a Travis McGee fan particularly, prefer the early stuff but John D. has probably taught more writers how to write than anybody. For me he was a revelation. He was studyable. You could read his stuff and learn craft from it. And of course I was influenced by any good writer I liked, it goes without saying. I hardly sprang full blown from Zeus' ear. But more than someone to study only, I had met John D. through some mutual friends and it was he who sent me to Knox Burger. This after he had first recommended me to his agent, Max Wilkinson, who wasn't interested, stating as his reason that he felt the private eye genre was a vein that had been thoroughly mined. "Okay," says John. "Max isn't the last word. Send it to Knox Burger at Dell and I'll ask him to look at it." Knox did and bought it. And mind you, John did this for a relative stranger. Decent, kind wonderful guy. I've heard other stories of his helpfulness too. All best, O.G. Benson.





## S F PORN

by

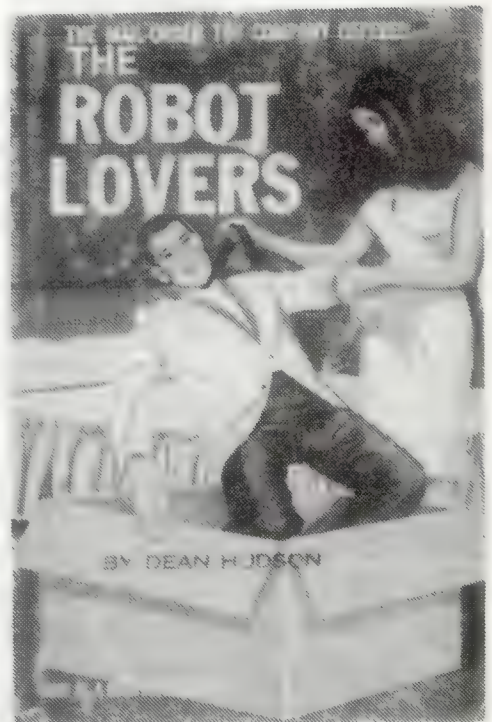
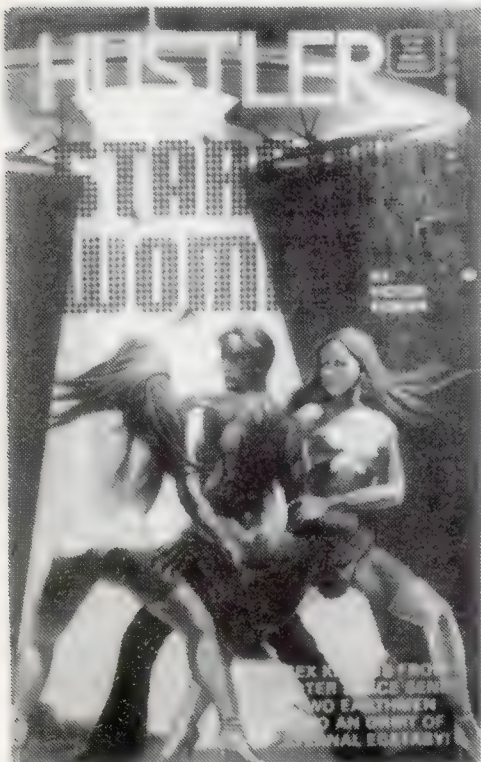
jed ieland

First of all, no one knows for sure (or can agree on) what science fiction pornography is. With that tiny detail set aside ...The overall package is probably the essence of sf porn. And there are four main

elements that go into this melange: a science fiction setting, erotic passages (and often the second takes precedence over the first), sexually provocative cover, and lurid blurbs. Most examples of the genre have all four, some have only two. It's not unusual for a classic sf porn release -- as is the case with sleazy digests of the '50s -- to contain no porn. The science fiction background is the only indispensable ingredient. Although some sf porn checklists have included fantasy and supernatural titles, this list sticks to books that concentrate on the futuristic, that is alien planets, aliens, spacecraft, and advanced technology amidst the lascivious astronauts and astronettes.

The process of re-packaging a mainstream science fiction novel in a sensational format has been termed "pornification" by Tom Nigra. A striking example of this questionable merchandising is Pike Book 203, The Com-

ing of the Rats by George H. Smith (1961) which was reissued as Pike Book 802, Virgin Mistress. The cover of the first release is a painting, in traditional horror style, of a woman being attacked by large rodents. The artwork on the reissue has erotogenically changed into a photo of a scantily clad temptress, with the caution "for adults only." Perhaps the first science fiction porn release was Beacon 236, Odd John by Olaf Stapledon (1959). Written in 1935 by a British philosophy professor, the novel deals with a group of people with superhuman mentalities who form a utopian colony. The naked man with bulging eyes pursuing the undressed woman across the Beacon cover is seeking another version of utopia. Bee Line Books has released Janet's Sex Planet under at least four different titles since 1978.



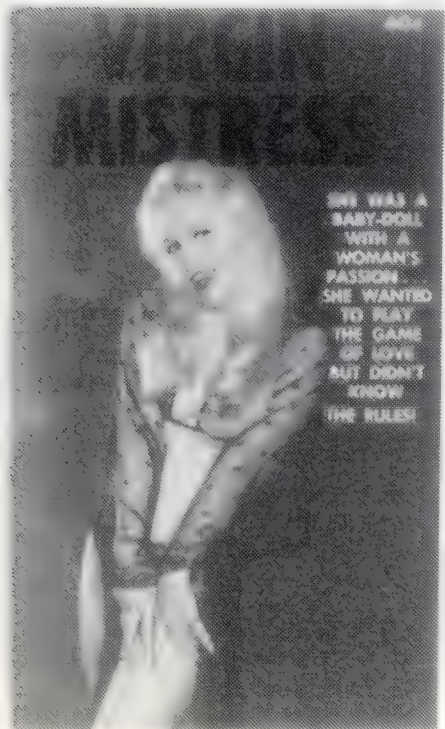


An impressive article and checklist on sf porn by Kenneth R. Johnson appeared in Science Fiction Collector, #4 and #5 (1977). It is still available from Pandora's Books, Ltd., P.O. Box 54, Neche, N.D. 58265. This list picks up where that one left off. The incisive comments about the novels are from Paul Dobish. This list makes no claims for comprehensiveness. Additions, corrections and comments are welcome.

## S F PORN CHECKLIST

compiled by paul dobish and tom nigra

- Anderson, Betty: Isle of Illusion, Hustler #10-148, 1980, presumably not written by the coed from Father Knows Best.
- Anonymous: The Orgy Puppets, Collector's Publications #21258, 1968, mind control via brain implantation of electrodes.
- Banks, Raymond E.: The Moon Rapers, Hustler #10-115, 1980, set in 3110 A.D.  
Ultimate Transform, Castle Books #CB-209, set in 3110 A.D. (same book, different cover art).
- Bellmore, Cynthia: Space Lust/Mixed Doubles, Dual Novels #DN-107, c.1978, adventures aboard the S.S. Lust (Second title not sf).
- Blake, Roger: Caper at Canaveral, Intimate Edition #724.
- Burch, Ralph: Duplicate Lovers, Hustler #10-135, 1980, robots with super sex capabilities.  
Lust in Space, Traveler's Tales Series #TT-108, c.1978, set in 3110 A.D., ...aha, either Ralph Burch and Raymond Banks are at least some of the time the same person or if you put two monkeys at two type-



writers for about two hours, you'd get...

Lust of the Swampman, Traveler's Tales Series #TT-112, c.1978.

Conrad, Bonnie: Helpless Women, Discovery House #6N296, c.1965, nuclear attack against the U.S.

Coxe, M.: The Oversexed Astronauts, Bee Line Books #427-Z, c.1970, gay spacemen cruise to Mars.

Crane, Martin: Sex Slaves, Hustler #10-258, 1981, alien lust explodes in an outer space orgy.

Deer, M.J.: A Place Named Hell, France Books #F50, 1963, on the planet Naraka (George H. Smith pseudonym).

Del Piombo, Akbar: The House in Lodz, Traveler's Companion Series #TC-462, c.1969, a sentient robot (William Burroughs pseudonym?).

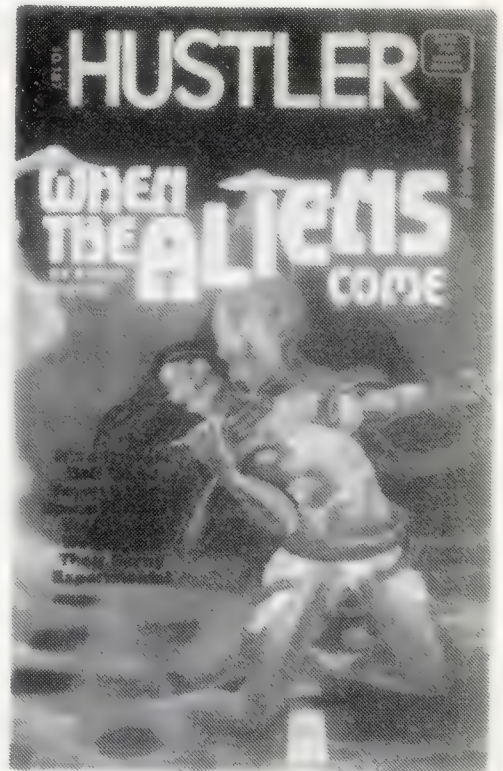
Dexter, John: Sin for Science, Late-Hour Library #LL717.

Erp, Peter: The Flesh Viewing Room, Spicy Reader #SR-139, c.1975, includes God performing an impossible sex act (fantasy?).

Farmer, Arthur: Odd Girl Out, All Star Classics Books #AS-2, c.1963, transplant of a male personality into a female body.

Fenwick, Virginia: America: R.I.P./Awakening of Passion, Specialty Book Double Novel #7N-796, c.1965, after The Bomb (second title not sf).

Forest, J.P.: Barbarella, Grove Press #GS2, 1968, Jane Fonda fleshes out





the role and the cover.

Gold, Bob: Anal Astronaut, Anal Erotic Series #AES-138, c.1981, unnatural acts in the 23rd century.

Gronowski, Paul: Doomsday Machinery, Blueboy Library #80080, c. 1977, after The Bomb Los Angeles becomes (?) a death trap. Gay C.I.A. agents.

Harmon, Jim: The Man Who Made Maniacs, Epic Books #107, 1961. Sin Spree, Moonlight Reader #MR 107 (AKA The Man Who Made Maniacs).

Harnes, Peter: The Arm of Arum, Frenchy's Gay Line #FGL-15, c.1970, short stories, after The Bomb, sex robots, others.

Hudson, Dean: The Robot Lovers, Nightstand Book #NB-1801, c.1966.

Hudson, Jan: Those Sexy Saucer People, Greenleaf Classic #GC 220, 1967 (George H. Smith pseudonym).

Kahler, Jack: Latex Lady, Carousel Books #521, c.1964, "She was all woman. Ask the men who made her." (AKA Rubber Dolly).

Kahn, Obie: Intergalactic Orgy, Bee Line Books #LL0621-M, 1983, the fourth titled version of Janet's Sex Planet.

Kanto, Peter: Rosy Cheeks, Bee Line Books #OB-603-K, c.1969, seven eggheads take over the world.

Kirby, Rolf: Nymphs Anonymous, Olympic Foto-Reader #FO-104, c.1967, women rule a future world. "A wild, delicious sinerama of sex-hungry babes and willing-to-serve slave studs."

Klepple. Horst: Hard On, Spicy Reader #SR-133, c.1974, "Harder than Human! A bionic man with a computer crotch satisfies the lust cravings of a super feminine world. More than mortal meat!"

Knerr, Mike: Autosex, France Books #F-61, 1963,

loving plastic-dolls almost human in their attributes.

Koman, Victor: Starship Women, Hustler #10-120, 1980, sex kittens from outer space.

Long, Peter: The Demi-wang, Pendulum #054, c.1968, an 18 1/4 inch long penis taken from a dead Ethiopian and preserved in a jar of orange juice is successfully grafted onto a person whose own penis had been severed during oral sex.

Longo, Chris: Wet Dreams, Spicy Reader #SR-138, c.1975, set in 1999 A.D., the Afroids vs. the Honks.

Miller, Russ: The Impossible Transplant, Greenleaf Classics #PC-1043, c.1972, the old inter-sex brain transplant again.

Mounds, Monica: Outer Space Embrace, Bee Line Books #BL-5500-R, c.1978, (AKA Pleasure Planet, Janet's Sex Planet, Inter-galactic Orgy and who knows what else?). Janet's mission is to find a planet where sex reigns - and when she does, you can imagine her bodily gains."

Nestle, Tom: Orgies in Space, Traveler's Tales Series #TT-109, c.1978.

Newton, Bill: Dr. Sexanna Blasts Off, PEC Series 70 #S7-108, c.1969. "If you're ready for a real trip, slide on behind (or in front, or under, or on top) of Dr. Sexanna, and hang on for dear life."

Onn, Carrie: Janet's Sex Planet/Orgy in Orbit, Bee Line Double Novel #DN-6410, c.1980 (Second title by Tea, Traves AKA Space Nymph).

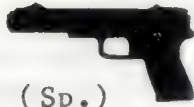
Paul, Aren: Fantastic Orgy, Merit Book #656, "You'll gasp as human sex drives are reproduced to their shocking extremes of ecstasy!" (AKA The Love



- Machine).
- Reeve, Frank D.: Five Finger Exercise, Midwood #60335, c.1973, perhaps the title refers to the typing skills of the author.
- Rimmer, A.J.: Space Whores, Hustler #10-101, 1979 (AKA Nestle's Orgies in Space).  
Star Whores, Castle Books #CB-213, c.1978, same as the above.
- Rucker, Rudy: The Sex Sphere, Ace #75984-X, 1983, "It was love between a mad scientist and a degenerate speck of hypermatter."
- Scott, Samantha: Space Slaves, Hustler #10-289, 1982.
- Smith, George H.: Satan's Daughter, Epic Books #113, 1961.  
Satan's Daughter, Moonlight Reader #113.  
Virgin Mistress, Pike Books #802, c.1961, "Is our planet doomed to be left to the rodents?" (AKA The Coming of the Rats).
- Taylor, Sharon: Future Sex, Pleasure Books #403095, c.1979.  
Pleasure Planet, Pleasure Books #40394, c.1979, "I have to have you right now," she pleaded. "My body is on fire." "This isn't the right place," he protested. "Is this the right place?" she asked coyly.
- Terrific, Ted: Star Whores, Pleasure Books #40482, c.1979.
- Tobias, Sara: Starship Stud, Pleasure Books #40378, c.1979.
- Verseau, Dominique: Yolanda, Slaves of Space, Grove Press #GP-4018, 1976, a beautiful sexologist heads an intergalactic mission of love.
- Victor, Steve: When the Aliens Come, Hustler #10-197, 1981, the title tells it all.
- Wagner, Geoffrey: Axel, Greenleaf Classics #GC-319, c. 1968.

# PUZZLER

barry kaplan



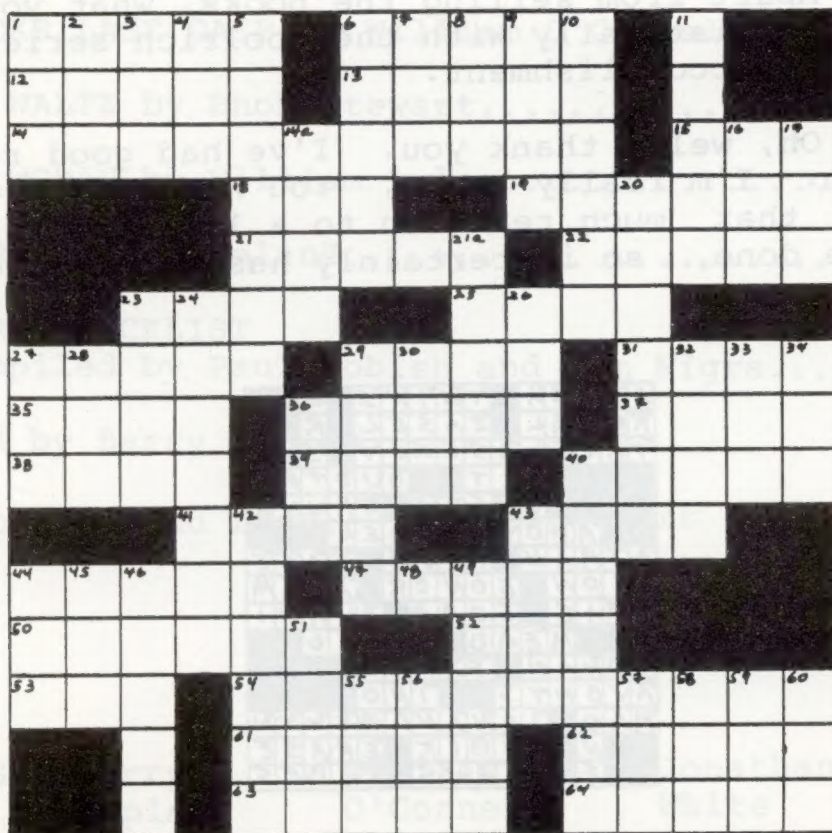
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. At what time? (Sp.)                        | 37. "Madam, I'm _____."                       |
| 6. Doubled pleasure                           | 38. H.S. math course                          |
| 12. Of the kidneys                            | 39. Urge                                      |
| 13. Belarski, Jonas, Zuckerberg might use one | 40. Cover artist, Signet                      |
| 14. A Hammett PB                              | 41. Food of the gods                          |
| 15. Take legal action                         | 43. Secondhand                                |
| 18. Wit's companion                           | 44. A barbarian                               |
| 19. Uno, _____, _____                         | 47. aka H.H. Munro et al.                     |
| 21. Formerlys, formerly                       | 50. First two of the series are <u>Return</u> |
| 22. Berle Bantam: <u>Out</u> of my _____      | <u>Postage Guaranteed</u>                     |
| 23. Agatha Christie's <u>Murder</u>           | and <u>Aaron's Rod</u>                        |
| 25. Actor Walter                              | 52. Personally, negative                      |
| 27. Compare to humanity                       | 53. Author of a little red book               |
| 29. Rose                                      | 54. British founding couple, to their friends |
| 31. R and R                                   | 61. Cubist                                    |
| 35. Imprint founded by Goodman                | 62. Rub out                                   |
| 36. Doomed man                                | 63. Spirits (Fr.)                             |
|   | 64. Hicks                                     |



- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>The Simple</u> _____ of <u>Murder</u> | 33. <u>The Spook Who</u> _____   |
| 2. Sound of one chuckle                     | <u>By the Door</u>               |
| 3. <u>Poison for</u> _____ (Avon)           | 34. Br. movie and record company |
| 4. Kind of paper                            | 36. What <u>Helen of Troy</u>    |
| 5. Las Vegas lights                         | and <u>Gentlemen Prefer</u>      |
| 6. I.Q. _____                               | <u>Blonds have in</u>            |
|   | common                           |



7. I \_\_\_\_\_ A Nazi Flyer
8. Suffix with aster  
and obel
9. Require
10. Crafty Shoshonean
11. P \_\_\_\_\_ v.
- 14a. Well ventilated
16. Keats' ode subject
17. Comicbook scream
20. Love me \_\_\_\_\_ me
- 21a. What the bell did  
for the boxer
23. Mine (Fr.)
24. The Whistling  
(Kendrick)
26. Suffix with bar and  
and rob
27. Ht. above sea level
29. Harry Grey's The
30. Shaw's Tip  
Dead Jockey
32. Surrealist (bkwds)
40. \_\_\_\_\_ as a judge
42. Complete
43. State school at  
Bloomington
44. Makes a motor rock
45. Female reproductive  
cells
46. \_\_\_\_\_ Knows My Name
49. English rockers,  
with "the"
51. Nobel Prize novelist,  
to his friends
55. League for tall men  
who are fast on their  
feet
56. Top grade, accepted
57. Prefix for "dite"
58. Moniker
59. Half of an exotic  
insect
60. Affirmative



## Bonibooks - Continued from page 30

the 1931 printings of earlier releases. But the gimmick couldn't save the imprint.

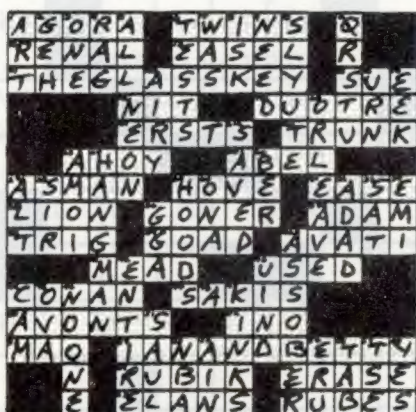
Although A & C Boni, Inc. continued to exist as a publishing house through the 1940's, by May, 1931 Bonibooks were being remaindered at three for a dollar (see Collecting Paperbacks?, vol. IV, no. 2). The Boni brothers' spunky experiment had failed and it would take another decade to fulfill their promise that paperbacks would "make good books as much a part of American life as the radio and the talkies."

## Shadow Waltz - Continued from page 37.

anything about it in a while. I know that a couple of theaters in LA had blown them up and used them all over the marquee for a Woolrich festival.

Q: Apart from selling the books, what you've done artistically with the Woolrich series is a real accomplishment.

A: Oh, well, thank you. I've had good reaction. I'm really happy. You know, I haven't had that much reaction to a lot of things I've done, so it certainly has been wonderful.





# PAPERBACK *Forum*

Special thanks to those who helped turn this idea into reality: Katherine Austin, John Benson, Charles Culpepper, Chris Eckhoff, Peter Fleischman, Philip Lyman of the Gotham Book Mart, Will Murray, John Songas, Ron Van Lieu, Sunny Van Lieu.

The books shown on the back cover are from the collections of Katherine Austin, Barry Kaplan, Geoffrey O'Brien, and Jonathan White. Readers are invited to submit photocopies of interesting covers from their collections for possible inclusion in future issues.



Although we are not now accepting orders for the second issue, let us know if you're interested so that we can reserve a copy for you.

Address all correspondence to: Barry Kaplan  
490 West End Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10024

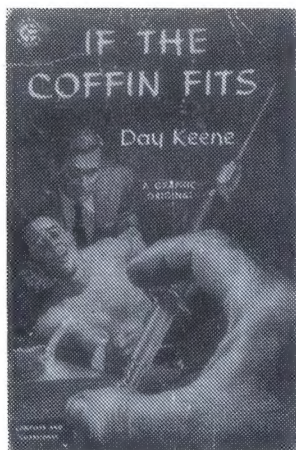


Front cover: Marilyn Monroe in Bus Stop (1956)  
Still - Museum of Modern Art

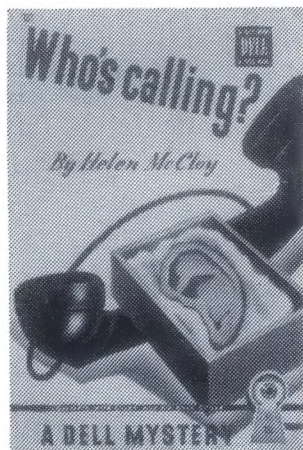
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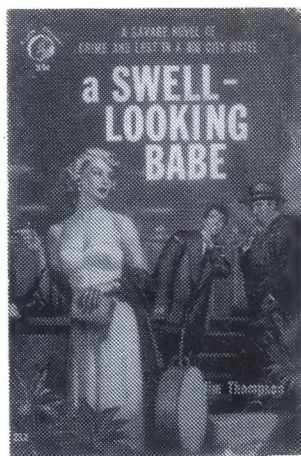
# Collectors' Choice



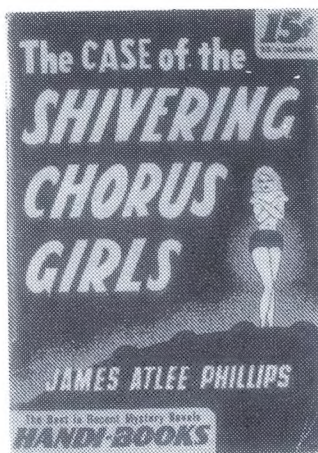
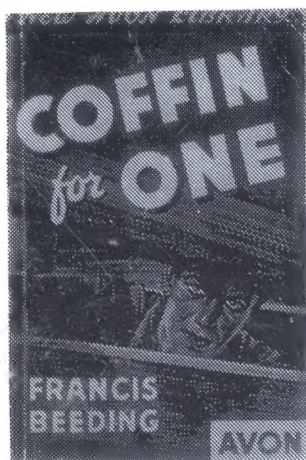
Graphic 43



Dell 151



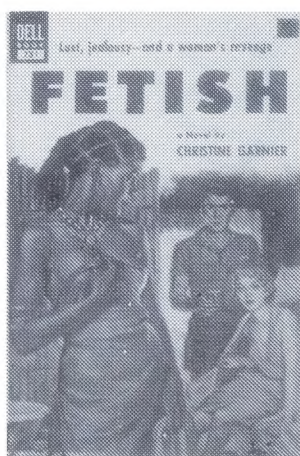
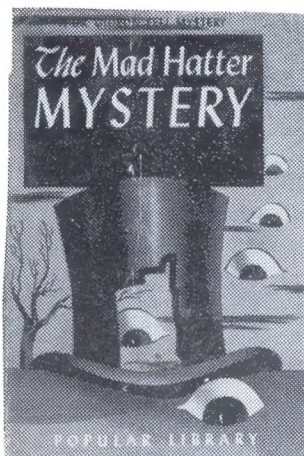
Lion 212



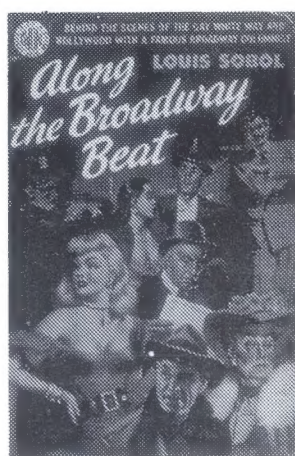
Handi Books 21



Popular Library 218



Dell 731



Avon 319